



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
*1102 SE Quince Street • PO Box 47990
Olympia, Washington 98504-7990*

February 7, 2002

The Honorable Pat Thibaudeau, Chair
Health and Long-Term Care Committee
Washington State Senate
414 John A. Cherberg Building
Post Office Box 40443
Olympia, Washington 98504-0443

Dear Madam Chair,

As Chair of the Washington State Board of Health's Environmental Health Committee, I am writing to support the concepts and goals of Senate Concurrent Resolution 8426. Studying the health effects of exposure to mold, especially the effects on more vulnerable subgroups such as young children and people with respiratory illnesses; reviewing the actions of other jurisdictions; and recommending ways the Legislature and private sector can work together to reduce risks associated with mold exposure, are important steps toward improving our state's indoor air quality.

I would like to take this opportunity to mention the State Board of Health's statutory authority regarding adopting "rules controlling public health related to environmental conditions including but not limited to heating, lighting, ventilation, sanitary facilities, cleanliness and space in all types of public facilities including but not limited to food service establishments, schools, institutions, recreational facilities and transient accommodations and in places of work." [RCW 43.20.050 (2) (c)]. Recommendations from the joint committee, subcommittees, and advisory groups referred to in SCR 8426 may pertain to the Board's area of authority and suggest improvements for the Board's rules.

SCR 8426's list of the advisory groups' membership includes a broad range of professions and perspectives on indoor mold issues and is therefore likely to come up with recommendations reflecting diverse concerns and expertise. The Board looks forward to hearing the recommendations of these advisory groups and would, perhaps, benefit from participating in one of the groups because of its environmental health rules and work.

The Board has heard extensive testimony from parents concerned about school's indoor air quality and their children's health at Board meetings in 1994 and 1998, and expects to hear additional testimony during its March 2002 meeting. I look forward to learning how the Board and agencies it works with can better address public concerns regarding perceived risks from indoor mold.

Sincerely,

Carl Osaki, R.S., M.S.P.H.
Chair, Environmental Health Committee

cc: Senate Health and Long-Term Care Committee Members
Ms. Ree Sailors, Governor's Office of Health Policy
Mr. Bill White, Department of Health
Ms. Patty Hayes, Department of Health
Washington State Board of Health Members
Don Sloma, State Board of Health